

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

of the

NORTH DANVERS

HOUSE OF WORSHIP



1872 – 1972

Anniversary Observance
August 27, 1972

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MINISTERS WHO SERVED

- Rev. Jonathan Yoder (1795-1869) helped organize the Rock Creek Amish church and remained pastor and bishop until his death.
- Rev. Michael Miller (1795-1873) ordained as deacon and was instrumental in building the church house at Rock Creek.
- Rev. Jacob Miller (1811-1893) ordained as deacon in the Rock Creek church.
- Rev. Christian Imhoff (1840-1881) ordained as deacon and also as treasurer of North Danvers.
- Rev. John Stahly (1827-1900) served as bishop.
- Rev. Joseph Stalter (1807-1878) served as minister.
- Rev. Joseph Stuckey (1825-1902) was bishop and pastor first at the Rock Creek church and then at North Danvers until his death.
- Rev. John Strubhar (1808-1883) ordained as deacon first of the Rock Creek church and then of North Danvers.
- Rev. Peter Schantz (1853-1925) served as minister at North Danvers (1882-1892) and later served other congregations.
- Rev. Joseph Stutzman (1853-1891) served as minister at North Danvers (1882-1891).
- Rev. J. H. King (1861-1935) served as minister at North Danvers (1892-1914) and later at Carlock.
- Rev. John Kohler (1859-1930) minister at North Danvers beginning 1899; served until 1920. During his ministry the church building was remodeled.
- Rev. Lawrence B. Haigh (1882-1963) served as Interim in 1922.
- Rev. William B. Weaver (1887-1963) served as pastor from July 1, 1922 to June 30, 1952.
- Rev. Hugo Mierau (1916-1972) served as pastor from 1952-1955.
- Rev. Arnold E. Funk served as pastor from 1956 to 1962.
- Rev. Frank Zacharias served as a summer pastor in 1960.
- Rev. Ben W. Krahn served as Interim in 1962.
- Rev. Samuel Ummel served as Interim in 1962.
- Rev. Herbert Miller served as pastor from 1963 to 1965.
- Rev. Raymond L. Harztler served as Interim from October 1965 to June 1966.
- Rev. George G. Dick served as pastor from 1966 to 1970.
- Rev. Wilbur Nachtigall served as Interim pastor 1970 to 1971.
- Rev. Walter H. Dyck began serving as pastor in a Shared Ministry program in 1971.
- Rev. Elmer A. Wall began serving as pastor in a Shared Ministry program in 1971.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

Celebrating the Building of the

North Danvers Mennonite

HOUSE OF WORSHIP

August 27, 1972

Morning Worship

10:30 o'clock

Organ Prelude

Call to Worship and Invocation

Hymn 373 "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

Moments with the Children

Responsive Reading 671

(Psalm 84:1-12)

Silent Meditation and Pastoral Prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer

Ladies Trio "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings"

Offering — Memorial markers, centennial speakers, centennial booklets, etc.

(Offertory by Mary Beth and James Brandt)

Message REBELS AND THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

Prayer

Dr. S. F. Pannabecker,
Elkhart, Indiana

Hymn 100 "Ye Servants of God"

Benediction

Organ Postlude

Guests are invited to share in a carry-in potluck meal with members of the congregation.

Afternoon Service

1:30 o'clock

Hymn 1 "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"

Devotional

Letters and Greetings

Men's Quartet "Trusting in the Lord"

Message "Not Perfect Without Us"

Prayer

Rev. R. L. Hartzler,
Bloomington, Illinois

Reminiscences

Hymn 262 "Faith of Our Fathers"

Adjournment to the Park Lawn Cemetery

3:00 o'clock

Litany of Dedication of Memorial Plaque

Prayer of Rededication

(W. B. Weaver)

Hymn "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee" (vs. 1-2)

Adjournment to Imhoff Cemetery

3:30 o'clock

Litany of Dedication of Memorial Plaque

Prayer of Rededication

(Joseph Stuckey)

Hymn "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee" (vs. 3-4)

Benediction

Additional copies of this booklet are available for free distribution to interested members and friends of the church.

You are invited to visit the display of historical materials during the noon hours. These have been gathered and arranged by Mrs. Elsie Sloneker, church historian.

LITANY OF DEDICATION

“For David, after he had served the counsel of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid to his fathers.” Acts 13:36

“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. . .” Hebrews 12:1-2

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.” Rev. 14:13

In recognition of and in appreciation for years of dedicated service in the early (ongoing) life and work of our church, we have caused to be set and herewith come to dedicate this memorial plaque:

“It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.”

To a due perpetuation of that recognition and appreciation both among ourselves and those who shall follow after us:

“We dedicate this memorial plaque.”

Realizing that we have entered into labors of those who toiled and served in years gone by, and to the end that that remembrance shall fruitfully obtain among us and our posterity as a benedictory and constraining memory:

“We dedicate this memorial plaque.”

Realizing, moreover, that only as we continue in our day and in our way to uphold the faith and implement the principles to which they resolutely gave themselves, can it be said that in us “their works do follow them,” and thus come into their own, realizing that we accordingly dedicate ourselves herewith to a more resolute and effective witness to that faith and way of life,

“We solemnly dedicate this memorial plaque, in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. AMEN.”

PRAYER OF REDEDICATION



“O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

“Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the homeward way.

“Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.

“In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future’s broad’ning way,
In peace that only Thou canst give;
With Thee, O Master, let me live.”

A LOOK AT THE PAST

Our heritage is something of great significance. Our congregation is part of an eternal plan. Our work is to do the work of God. The household of which we are a part and the building of which we are a part has a very firm foundation. For "you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit; (Ephesians 2:19-22) As a specific congregation we have had the privilege of being a part of Christ's church for over a century.

Our congregation has a rootage and a heritage also in our community. The early members of our congregation were pioneers with a certain background. The North Danvers church can be traced to the Rock Creek Amish Church also known as the Yoder congregation. This congregation was organized in the latter part of 1851. After worshipping in homes for about two years a church house was built in 1853. This was the first Amish church house in the state of Illinois. The building was located on the farm of Joseph Gerber, approximately 4 miles north of Danvers. This was a frame structure measuring 28' x 36' and costing about \$500.

Changes always take place. This building rapidly became too small for the growing congregation. Settlers were also beginning to move into the flat prairie areas due to the draining of the prairie lands and the coming of the railroads. This shifted the center of the community.

In 1872 it was agreed to sell the Rock Creek church and build a new frame structure on the present site. The name of the congregation was changed to "North Danvers Mennonite Church." This structure was a 40' x 62' building. Information of the building process is very limited.

According to William Weaver's account the activities of the congregation made some marked changes at this time. The church was more thoroughly organized. Business meetings were held annually and records of meetings were kept. Different officers were elected to the various positions in the church organization.

The congregation now encouraged Sunday School work. By 1880 Sunday School and church were held every Sunday. By 1890 the Sunday School had organized a Teacher's Meeting. The English language was introduced into Sunday School about 1887 and into the church service in 1893.



North Danvers Church built in 1872.

Some money was contributed to foreign mission work. One phase of home mission work was the establishment of new congregations in the surrounding communities. This explains the decrease of membership of the North Danvers congregation. Rev. Joseph Stuckey was largely responsible for the leadership and bishop oversight of these newly organized congregations of this period.

Forty-five years later there again was a need for change in the building facilities. During 1917 an extensive remodeling job was performed. The building was raised to accomodate a basement beneath the entire church. The building was covered with face brick and stained glass windows were used throughout. An extension was built on the front. New curved pews were installed. Many other changes of the building were made at this time. The cost was \$8,000 without indebtedness.

On Sunday, May 3, 1964, the congregation again felt that after 47 years, the church building needed further remodeling. At this time they voted to go forward with a project estimated to cost over \$25,000. The basement and sanctuary were remodeled. Several additional classrooms were added to the building. The dedication service of the remodeled church building was held August 1, 1965.

In this brief sketch of the history of our congregation we note how over the years there was a concern for proper church facilities. The need for a Sunday School was clear to our forefathers. In describing Sunday School conventions, S. F. Pannabecker states that already in 1889 North Danvers was represented at a Sunday School convention. With a Sunday School there is a

need for good educational facilities. So already in the early years of our congregation the condition of the church building was considered important.

The church is, of course, more than a building; it is people. The church building is a facility, an instrument, to be used to help people, to strengthen fellowship and to promote and proclaim the gospel. It really depends upon our generation as to how well these fine facilities will be used now.

There is continued need for certain changes. Facilities adequate at one time later are no longer able to meet new needs. How important for a congregation to be able to discern what should never be changed and also what ought to be changed.

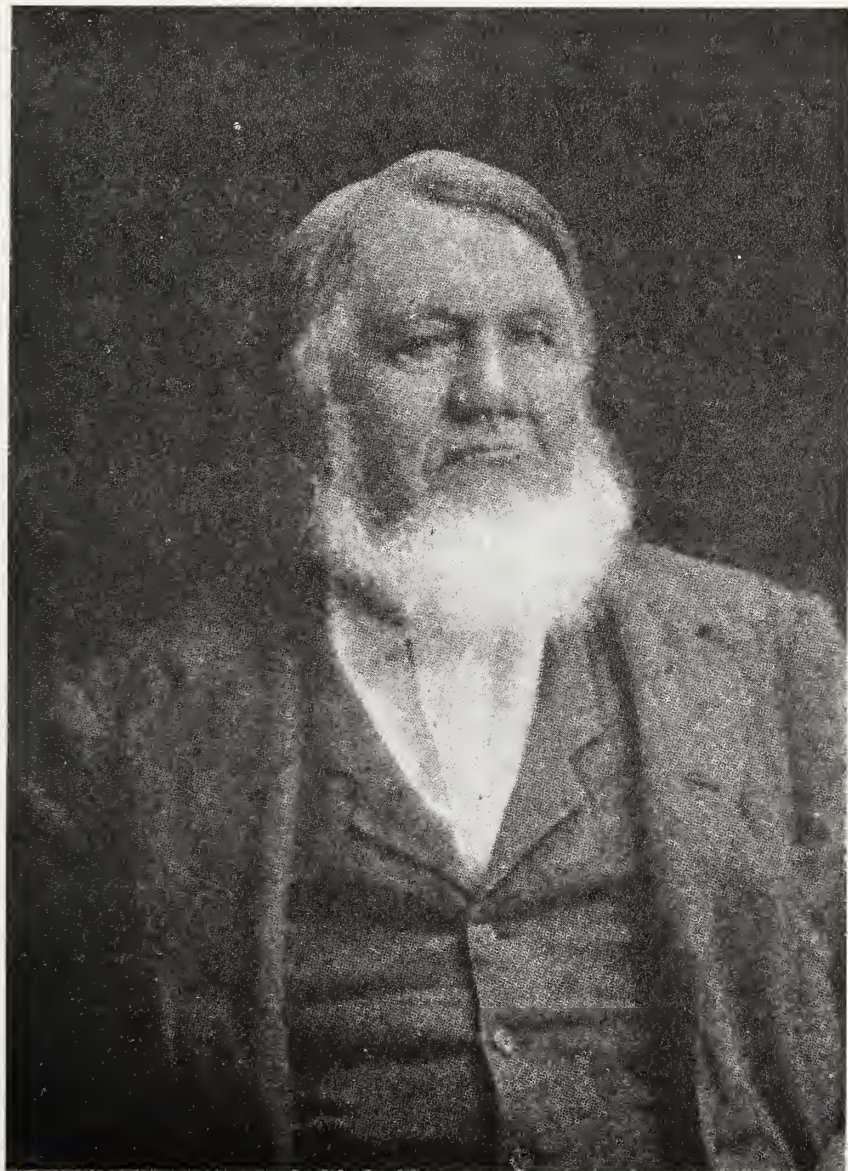
So in looking back we are thankful for the renewal God has brought. We rejoice that because of growth the church building needed rebuilding from time to time. God also helped in bringing other needed changes so that we can proclaim more effectively that which is changeless -- the gospel of Jesus Christ.

IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH STUCKEY

Joseph Stuckey, later affectionately known as "Father Stuckey," was born on July 12, 1825 in the Alsace, a small country wedged between France, Germany and Switzerland. His grandparents had lived in Bern, Switzerland. When his father, Peter Stuckey, was still a small child his parents moved to Alsace which at the time was a province of France. Many of the early settlers in our churches also came from that area.

Joseph Stuckey was the oldest of a family of eight children. His parents came to Butler County, Ohio, in 1830. For only two months he attended one of the old log school houses. At eighteen he became a member of the Amish Church. Though he had little formal education, he had an alert and eager mind and did much in educating himself.

In 1844 he was married to Barbara Roth. Two children were born to this union. His wife died in 1881. He then married Magdalene, a sister of his first wife.



Joseph Stuckey

(Rev. Joseph Stuckey) 1825-1902





In October, 1850, as a man of twenty-five, he came to Central Illinois. For a few months he worked in a packing house, and then, in March, 1851, he rented some land in Danvers Township, McLean County. In 1858 he bought forty acres at \$3 an acre. Ten years later, besides his heavy pastoral duties, he was farming 200 acres. He retired from farming in 1868 and lived with his daughter who had moved to the farm. In 1877 he moved to the village of Danvers where he resided until his death. Rev. Stuckey died February 5, 1902, and was buried in the Imhoff cemetery south of Congerville. Before his death he had selected II Timothy 4:7-8 as his funeral text. His second wife died about two years later.

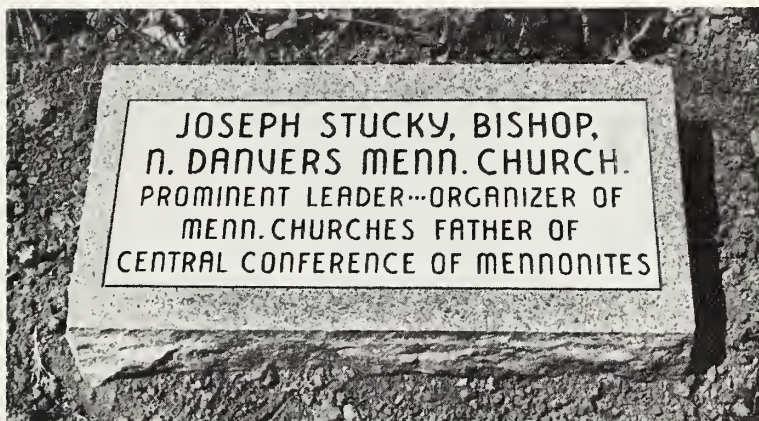
On April 8, 1860, at the age of thirty-five, he was ordained to the ministry by Bishop Jonathan Yoder in the old Rock Creek Church. Four years later he was called to serve as bishop in the same church. His influence increased so that by the time of the death of Jonathan Yoder in 1869, Joseph Stuckey was a well recognized leader among the Amish Mennonites in Illinois and elsewhere.

In 1922, at a reception held for William B. Weaver. C. R. Stuckey, the son of "Father Stuckey," presented a paper in which he related the following:

"He was then a young man, just a common farmer with very limited schooling, working hard every day on the farm, trying to establish a home for himself and his family, and lay up something for old age. . . Well do I remember how my father used to pore over his Bible after doing a hard day's work until into the late hours of the night. . . but in the morning he would be up bright and early, ready for another hard day's work." (Wm. B. Weaver)

He was able to draw large crowds in his pulpit efforts. Beginning with the use of French in his native land, upon coming to America, he learned the German. He did practically all his studying and preaching in the German language. Coming to Illinois he also became quite proficient in the English. His daughter tells how one day he returned from Bloomington with a copy of the Daily Pantagraph. Asked by the family what he wanted with it he said he was going to learn to read English.

He was one of the chief promoters in the building of the Yoder Church House in 1853, also in the relocation to the present site of the North Danvers facilities originally erected just 100 years ago this summer. While serving as pastor at North Danvers he also had the bishop oversight of a number of congregations that had been established from the mother church, and from which the Central Conference of Mennonites ultimately evolved.



Marker Dedicated August 27, 1972

In his ministry, records reveal, he performed 255 marriages, 1,328 baptisms, and ordained 18 bishops. He travelled a great deal in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska, baptizing converts, establishing churches, ordaining ministers, and dedicating church buildings. He kept in touch with other Mennonite and Amish leaders in the United States.

In time differences of emphasis and practice developed between himself and other Amish leaders, so that he found it increasingly difficult, between 1866 and 1872, to continue meaningful relationships with the Amish conference of churches. He was criticized severely for his progressive ideas, blamed for being unorthodox because he was sympathetic toward those with whom he might have differed theologically. He was concerned for those who had left the old church and were in need of leadership.

William B. Weaver, another minister of distinction in the North Danvers Church, wrote in his *History of the Central Conference of Mennonites*:

“Rev. Stuckey’s outstanding qualities were his natural ability for leadership, his pulpit powers, his positive convictions, his great organizing ability and his sympathetic attitude toward people and toward the problems that the church was facing.” Then he adds, “Rev. Joseph Stuckey was to the Amish of Central Illinois what Menno Simons was to the peaceful group of Anabaptists. He did not establish a new church but he organized the forces which were then existing and assumed the leadership of a group of people who were without a shepherd.” “He was a large man physically,” one of the men who knew him said, “but to me he seemed even larger morally, mentally and spiritually.”



William B. Weaver contemplating a portrait painting of Menno Simons, a founding father of the Mennonites.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM B. WEAVER

William B. Weaver was born January 24, 1887, at Nappanee, Indiana, but most of his youth and early life was spent in the vicinity of Shipshewana in Lagrange County. He received his A.B. degree from Goshen College in 1914. He taught public school for six years and at Goshen College for eight years. He received his M.A. degree at Northwestern University in 1926.

He was married to Fanny A. Stoltzfus and they became the parents of eight children.

Rev. Weaver was licensed to preach in 1913, and ordained to the ministry September 14, 1914. He served one year as pastor at the Barker Street Mennonite Church near Vistula, Indiana, and in 1914 became the pastor of the Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Indiana, which church he served until 1920. He subsequently moved to Illinois where he was pastor of the North Danvers Congregation from 1922 until 1952. He later served as supply pastor at the Bethel Church of Pekin, and the Boyton Church at Hopedale. He died December 12, 1963. Burial was made in the Park Lawn Cemetery at Danvers.

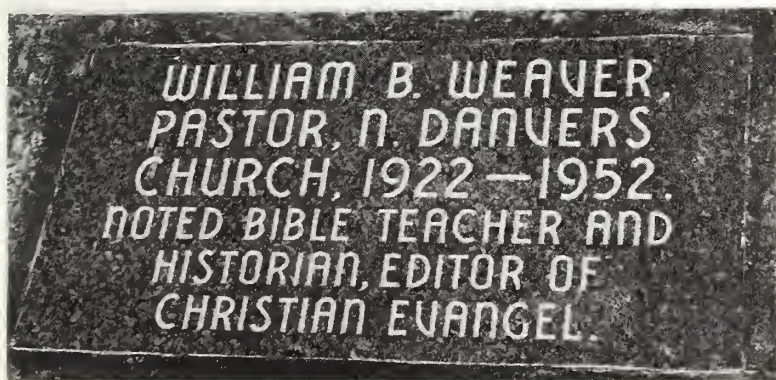
While serving as pastor at North Danvers he also edited the "Christian Evangel" for 14 years. He was a member of the Bluffton College Board for 25 years, and a member of the Congo Inland Mission Board for a similar period. He authored two books: *History of the Central Conference of Mennonites* and *Thirty-five Years in Congo*.

Rev. Weaver was noted for his ability as a teacher. He taught a woman's Sunday School class known as the Kum-Joy-Nus for a number of years. Later he taught a men's Bible class at North Danvers, and a weekly Bible class in Danvers for the men of the community.

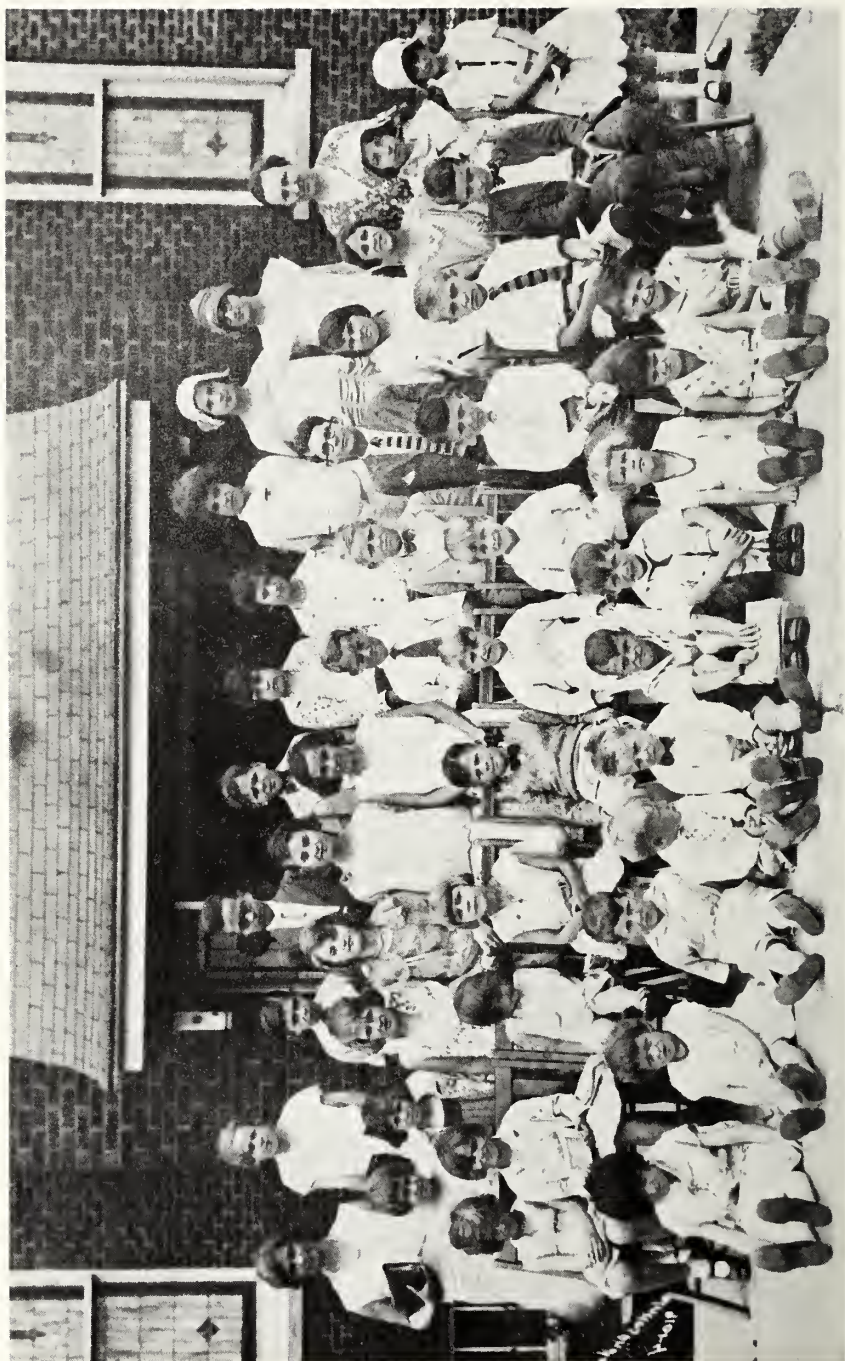
He worked closely with the three deacons of the church. All three served during the entire pastorate of Rev. Weaver. They are: U. S. Stahly, F. P. Schwartz and F. E. Risser. Each of these men were later given the title of Deacon Emeritus.

During his ministry he helped introduce new types of activity in the church. These include: home department, junior church, church board, Upper Room and the weekly church bulletins.

William Weaver had many abilities. He helped people work harmoniously. He was a church historian. A "Pantagraph" editorial, at the time of his death, looking back over his many years of service, thirty of which were spent at North Danvers, said: "He cultivated the spiritual fields in the countryside. The harvest of richer living will be his monument."



Marker Dedicated August 27, 1972





FIRST NORTH DANVERS JUNIOR CHURCH, page 18

Front Row (l to r) Orlyn Miller, Joan Denler Colman, Grace Miller Keighen, Leo Hurley, Richard Denler, Ali Stahly, Jr., Norval Stahly, Marlin Fry, Dorothy Miller Haeffele, Irene Miller Birky.

2nd Row Donald Sloneker, John Garrett, Wilfred Maurer, Justin Weaver, David Weaver, Leo Miller, Barbara Garrett, Eva Lou Amberg Hannie, Joybell Weaver Thutt, Betty Risser Esch.

3rd Row Lorene Henry, Anita Yoder, Elsie Wick, Emma Weaver Wheeler, Vernon Henry, Maurice Stahly, Robert Fry, Joan Weaver Schertz, Genevieve Maurer Urban, Anna Snearly, Jean Sloneker Singley, Florence Weaver Cate, Majorie Zoller Lynch.

4th Row Mrs. Ali Stahly, Ass't Junior Church Supt., Vivian Henry, Roberta Kohler Eickhorst, Mary Grace Risser Bell, Myra Pease Legner, Ruth Ummel Hill, Lory Stahly, Donald Yoder, Harold Stahly, Gladys Zoller Connors, Mrs. William B. Weaver, Junior Church Supt.

REV. WEAVER'S MEN'S BIBLE CLASS, page 19

Front Row (l to r) Floyd Fry, Frank Risser, Harry Ummel, Harvey Miller, Dale Pease, Anson Yoder, Ralph Spencer, Perry Yoder, Robert Risser, Lloyd Denler, Elmer Miller, Cary Yoder, Lowell Risser, Jake Reeser.

2nd Row Dan Steinman, Dan Bradle, Jacob Yoder, U. S. Stahly, Fred Stahly, C. R. Stuckey, Peter Risser, Peter Gerber, Rev. W. B. Weaver, Adam King, John Munsell, Jake Miller, Edward Kinsinger, Mr. Stolfus.

3rd Row Jesse Kohler, Edwin Miller, Fred Spencer, Joseph Zook, Judson Yoder, Albert Fry, Herbert Sloneker, Tom Pease, Frank Schwartz, Bert Anthony, Andrew Zoller, Walter Yoder, Eldon Stahly, Harry Stahly, Lester Yoder, Nicholas Maurer, Everett Yoder.

4th Row William Miller, Park Stahly, Russell Snearly, Clarence Amberg, Melvin Raber, Charles Lehrman, Walter Risser, Ali Stahly, Phinas Yoder, Delmar Stahly, Forrest Stahly, Donald Risser, Weldon Anthony, Delmar Zook.

Members of the Centennial Anniversary Committee:

Pastor Elmer Wall

Pastor Walter Dyck

Rev. R. L. Hartzler

Mrs. W. B. Weaver

Mrs. Herbert Sloneker, Church Historian

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AUTHOR

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Danvers house of worship

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Clara Hochstadt

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